GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY
LOK SABHA

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:887
ANSWERED ON:22.11.2002
ACHIEVEMENTS OF WTO AGREEMENTS
M.A. KHARABELA SWAIN

Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) the details of achievements / losses occurred by India after signing WTO agreements;

(b) the items whose export / import has been increased since then and upto what extent;

(c) whether there is a demand for withdrawal from WTO;

(d) if so, the reaction of the Government thereto; and

(e) the overall position of India after becoming member of WTO?

Answer

MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY (SHRI RAJIV PRATAP RUDY)

(a) to (e) India is a founding Member of the World Trade Organization (WTO) since its inception on 1 January 1995. WTO is a rules-based Organization that provides an institutional framework for the conduct of trade relations among its members. The range of WTO Agreements, which constitute this rules-based system for the governance of international trade, represent a balance of rights, concessions, commitments and obligations on the part of all Member countries. India`s participation in this system is to ensure more stability and predictability, which ultimately would lead to more trade and prosperity for itself and the other Members of the WTO. By being a WTO Member, India also avails of the Most Favoured Nation (MFN) Treatment and National Treatment for its exports to other WTO Members. India has been actively participating in the work of the WTO Bodies and has been taking positions so as to safeguard its interests as well as that of other developing countries. In this regard, India`s participation at the Doha Ministerial Conference should be seen as an achievement for the developing countries. India along with other developing countries have been able to bring developmental issues including the issue relating to Public Health and the TRIPS Agreement to the forefront of the WTO work. Further, India has been actively participating in the on-going negotiations under the Doha Work Programme.

Since the coming into force of WTO, India`s exports have gone up from US $ 26330.28 million in 1994-95 to US $ 43559.93 million in 2001-02. Similarly, the imports have also risen from US $ 28654.37 million to US $ 51087.26 million during the same period.

While there have been some suggestions from time to time for withdrawal from the WTO, there have also been many suggestions for strengthening our participation in the WTO. Since India is fully committed to the rules-based international trading system the government does not see any merit in considering withdrawal from the WTO.